



February 2, 2021

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Department of Licenses and Inspections  
Municipal Services Building, Concourse  
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard  
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Leonidas Addimando  
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Elise Vider

**Re: Civic Design Review for 701 Girard Avenue (Application ZP-2020-007284)**

Dear Mr. Roland Ngaba,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed mixed-use development at **701 Girard Avenue**.

The proposal is for a 4-story residential and commercial mixed-use building containing 53 dwelling units, 7,800 square feet of ground floor commercial space, 2,475 square feet of ground floor amenity space, and zero on-site parking spaces (none are required by code). The proposal sits on a CMX-2 parcel and seeks a green roof density bonus. The project, as designed, was issued two refusals, as follows:

- Use: 53 dwelling units proposed (43 allowed by-right)
- Height: 45 feet proposed (38 feet allowed by-right)

At its meeting of February 2, 2021, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**1. RCO Comments**

Both the Fishtown Neighbors Association and the Fishtown Kensington Area Business Improvement District were in attendance as RCOs for this project. They had similar design comments.

The RCOs did not support the use of fiber cement panels on the Girard Avenue façade. They also agreed with the PCPC staff comment to consolidate loading to a single area on Berks Street.

**2. CDR Committee Comments**

The Civic Design Review Committee had a number of positive design comments, noting that the project proposes many admirable design features and will be a welcoming development on Girard Avenue. The committee provide the following comments which include the PCPC staff findings as well.

Committee members commended the design for successfully integrating a dense project into the existing fabric of the neighborhood with a well-designed façade composition on Berks Street. However, several committee members had concerns with the use of the fiber cement panels on the façade on Girard Avenue in terms of the overall design composition. The fiber cement panels create a “featureless” section of the elevation that does not fit into the remainder of the

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composition. The committee asked the design team to better integrate the fiber cement and masonry materials on the Girard Avenue elevation to echo the liveliness of the Berks Street façade.

In addition, committee members asked the design team to make the tree pits larger to ensure tree health and to look for more opportunities for sustainability features.

Finally, the committee reiterated PCPC staff and RCO comments to consolidate the loading area to Berks Street.

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the committee's action.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Sharpe  
Executive Director

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February 2, 2021

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**Re: Civic Design Review for 1401 S Christopher Columbus Boulevard  
(Application No. ZP 2020-007455)**

Dear Paulose Isaac,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed mixed-use development at **1401 S Christopher Columbus Boulevard**.

This proposal is to build mixed-use buildings on a waterfront parcel on the Delaware River. The parcel is between the alignments of Tasker Street to the south, Reed Street to the north, privately owned River Drive to the west, and the Delaware River to the east. The site is zoned CMX-3 and there are no zoning refusals. The portion of the site south of Dickinson Street was previously reviewed by the Civic Design Review Committee on January 7, 2020. The northern portion of the site, between Dickinson and Reed Streets was reviewed on February 2, 2021 and is the subject of this letter. In the northern portion of the site, the applicant proposes a total of 504,981 square feet with 485 dwelling units, 37,865 square feet of commercial space, and 200 accessory parking spaces.

At its meeting of February 2, 2021, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**1. RCO Comments:**

A representative from Pennsport Civic Association offered the following comments:

There were concerns from their members about parking in the area and accessibility of the waterfront. Therefore, they requested a dedicated bike lane on either Reed or Dickinson Streets and requested continued access to the waterfront trail throughout the construction of all project phases. They encouraged bike access to the trail be made available as soon as possible.

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## 2. CDR Committee Comments:

At the meeting, the CDR Committee offered the following comments, which include Planning Commission staff observations adopted by the CDR Committee.

The committee affirmed concerns about access to the waterfront and trail along Dickinson and Reed Streets. They encouraged the removal of parallel parking on Dickinson Street and the reduction of building width on Reed Street to attain or exceed the minimum dimensions needed to meet Complete Streets standards—12' wide for both sidewalks. They noted that greater sidewalk widths might be necessary to support commercial uses in the future, especially on Dickinson Street.

The committee amplified Planning Commission staff concerns about the location of commercial spaces. They suggested that retail and commercial uses would be more successful if they faced the waterfront, where there would be more visibility from foot and bicycle traffic generated by the trail. To facilitate this, they recommended exploring the placement of lobbies and resident amenities on the streets rather than facing the waterfront. They noted that the balconies facing the waterfront already suggested a willingness to engage the river with visible activity. Commercial spaces should also face the river to maximize the views for patrons and to energize the public realm with activities that could spill out into the open spaces alongside the trail.

They clarified that they agreed with decisions to limit automobile access to the waterfront—neither the project nor the trail would benefit from a riverside roadway. To further minimize the impact of the automobile, the committee encouraged the turn-arounds to be curbless with drivable paving materials that suggest traffic calming and spaces shared with pedestrians. They also noted that bicycle storage directly off the trail was a benefit, and that the applicant should follow through on their commitment to explore the bike share station for the site.

To better understand the entire public realm related to the proposal, the committee affirmed questions and answers about the adjacent pier. While they did want to understand its future use, access, and design, at this time the applicant could not provide answers since it was not in the scope of work of this application.

They encouraged the applicant to achieve higher sustainable design measures, especially on credits related to energy and atmosphere. This could deliver more long-term value for the residents and for the city, especially on such a high profile site.

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Committee's action.



Sincerely,

Eleanor Sharpe  
Executive Director

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**Re: Civic Design Review for 3151 Market Street (Application #ZP-2020-008285C)**

Dear Mr. Isaac,

Pursuant to Section 14-304(5) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, the Civic Design Review (CDR) Committee of the City Planning Commission completed the required review of a proposed mixed-use development at **3151 Market Street**.

The proposal is for a 13-story office, research lab and commercial mixed-use building with two retail spaces totaling 14,300 square feet, 428,100 square feet of lab and office space and 100 below grade parking spaces totaling 33,900 square feet. There are several publicly accessible open spaces on site including a temporary mural walk which will be utilized for pedestrians and bicyclists. The proposal sits on a CMX-5 zoned parcel and thus is a by-right project.

At its meeting of February 2, 2020, the Civic Design Review Committee completed the CDR process and offered the following comments:

**1. RCO Comments**

Powelton Village Civic Association was the coordinating RCO for this project. Overall, PVCA noted that 3151 Market Street is a commendable project and has many positive design elements focused on the public realm experience. They held a virtual public meeting on January 19, 2021 and provided the following comments.

The RCO representative noted agreement with PCPC staff comments, highlighting the well-designed and sustainable building, complimented the high-quality materials, applauded the connective and green open spaces of the project, and appreciated the project's pedestrian and bicycle accessibility.

Powelton Village did have one concern, asking the architect to consider how the project can further prevent bird strikes. The representative requested refinement of the building elevations which consist of mostly reflective glazing for the tower.

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## **2. CDR Committee Comments**

The Civic Design Review Committee had numerous positive public realm comments, noting that the project proposes many admirable design features and will be a welcomed addition to the Schuylkill Yards Master Plan. The committee applauded the high quality design, noting the refined material palette, well-considered landscape and streetscape elements. The committee noted that many of their comments are intended to offer recommendations for improvements to an already strong proposal.

The committee and PCPC staff stated their main concerns with this project are the loading and parking functions. While PCPC staff and the committee applauded the underground parking, they asked the project to consider placing all back of house functions underground to minimize their impacts on the public realm. One CDR Committee member recognized that not every elevation can be active, but challenged the project team to consider servicing future adjacent developments through shared underground loading. Having multiple buildings with shared underground parking and loading functions would minimize street level conflicts along sidewalks, could potentially save money in the long-term and provide more opportunities to activate and promote walkability within the larger master plan.

The committee asked the project team to consider the larger neighborhood context, specifically how pedestrians and visitors of the building will access other blocks and other adjacent open, public spaces. The committee requested the project team consider providing mid-block crossings and other pedestrian safety streetscape features that could improve connections to this building and other Schuylkill Yards and University City amenities.

The Committee noted that the mural walk was intriguing, but it appeared underdeveloped. The committee asked if it was the best solution, while recognizing that it is a temporary condition. Some committee members questioned if the mural walk could become even more unique, with design elements that were more exceptional, such as new lighting elements, a different scale and size of murals, or more interesting vegetation.

The committee applauded the project team for their commitment to sustainability, applauding the project team for going through the certification process of LEED v4 Gold. The committee also highlighted the addition of new street trees and green spaces which will help improve heat island effects within the existing urban context.

Lastly, the committee appreciated the public comments made regarding minority business support. The committee chair specifically encouraged the project team to continue to work with minority contractors, architects, and building specialty workers and encouraged more project teams to do the same.

In conclusion, the Civic Design Review process has been completed for this project. Please contact me if you have any questions about the committee's action.





Sincerely,

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Executive Director

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